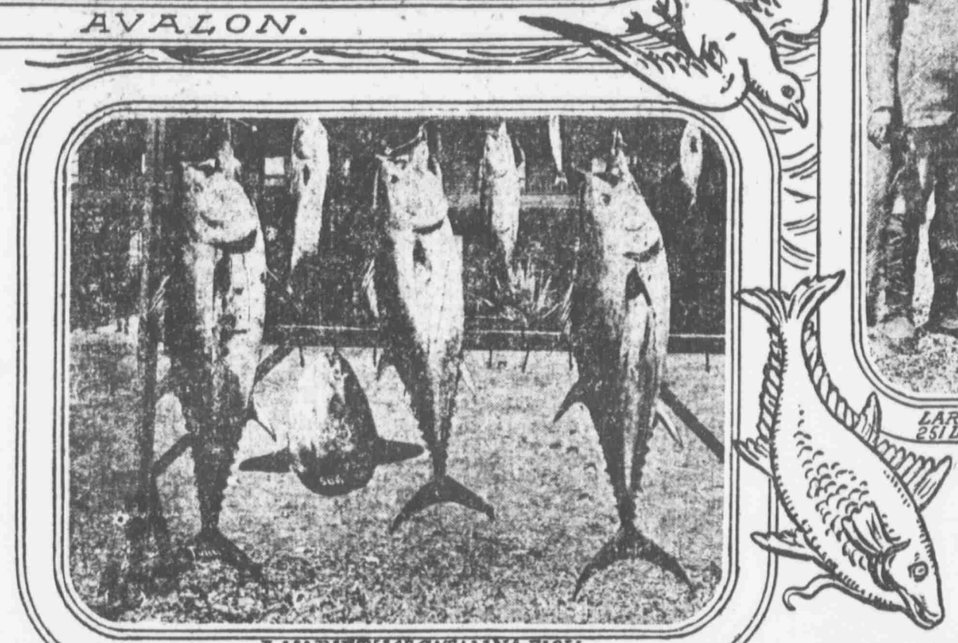
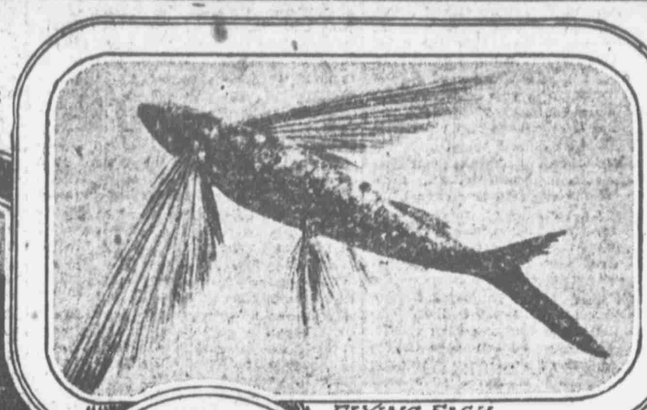
Now Anglers Prepare to Hook With Delicate Tackle the Mighty Tuna of the Pacific

AVALON.



A VARIETY OF CATALINA FISH, INCLUDING THREE TUNA AND A SUN FISH.



FLYING FISH, USED AS BAIT FOR TUNA.

LARGEST TUNA EVER CAUGHT, 251 LBS. CAPTURED BY COL. C. P. MOREHOUSE

In a short time hundreds of fishermen all over the country will turn longing eyes toward Santa Catalina Island, off the coast of southern California. From May 1 until Oct. 1 they will arrive from North, East, South and West—from London, from Paris, from other points of Europe. It is even said that a Russian Grand Duke will this year join the tuna squad at Catalina, if Providence or a bomb doesn't interfere.

All the tuna experts of the island predict that this will be a good year for the big fish. Capt. Nick, Jim Gardner and Mexican Joe, who scarcely ever agree on anything, are united in the belief that the tuna record will be broken. Col. C. P. Morehouse of Pasadena, Cal., doesn't believe this.

Col. Morehouse holds the record—251 pounds—and consequently he is biassed. He has held the record since 1900, and he says that if there is any breaking to be done he will be on hand to attend to it himself.

At any rate, when the members of the Tuna Club meet for their annual banquet and election of officers at the Hotel Metropole at Avalon in June, there will be such a gathering of piscatorial experts as would make that dear old humbug Izaak Walton, who knew more about the philosophy of living than about fishing, turn in his grave from sheer excess of envy. Avalon is the only town on the island, and it is from here that the devotees of the sport start out in quest of the gamest fish taken in any waters with rod and reel.

To land a tuna is the ambition of every fisherman who has ever trolled the Catalina waters. It is the easiest thing in the world to hook a tuna, on days when they are biting freely, but to land one is quite another matter. Probably not one fish in a hundred that strikes is captured. And then it's a case of new tackle.

But once you have captured a tuna weighing at least 100 pounds—it must be 100 pounds to entitle you to admission into the Tuna Club—you feel like the General of old who sighed because there were no more worlds to conquer. Once you catch a tuna, it spoils you for any other sort of fishing. Your whole ambition is then centred in catching another and a bigger one.

During the past winter a tourist started up a conversation on the beach at Avalon with a bronzed man in a brown homespun suit who seemed to know all the boatmen. During the course of conversation the bronzed man vouchsafed the information that his name was Manning—Thomas S. Manning of Philadelphia.

"My home is in Philadelphia, too," said the tourist. "How long have you been here?"

"Three years," replied Mr. Manning. "I came out here three years ago for the tuna fishing, and I've been here ever since."

"How long do you expect to stay?"

The expatriated Philadelphian scratched his head reflectively.

"I really don't know," he said slowly. "It depends. I may get the record catch this season, and then maybe I'll be satisfied. But I don't know. You can't tell."

And Mr. Manning's attitude is characteristic of the confirmed tuna fisherman. Few of them have the leisure to wait three years, but all have the inclination.

To realize the true significance of the Tuna Club it must be known that nowhere except in the waters adjacent to Santa Catalina Island is this prince of fish taken with rod and reel. Tuna are occasionally caught in the Mediterranean, but only in the nets of the fishermen who supply the markets, and then they create such havoc that they are gladly liberated with as little damage as possible.

But in the clear water of the Pacific, in that marvellously clear channel between Catalina Island and San Pedro on the mainland, they come every summer to disport themselves and to feed upon the flying fish, for which they leap into the air with all the zest of the chase. Although for years they had been caught spasmodically, it was not until 1899 that several devotees of the sport conceived the idea of organizing a club on competitive lines.

The member who caught the largest fish during the season, from May 1 to Oct. 1, was to become president of the club and to receive a medal setting forth that honor. Prof. Charles Frederick Holder, the naturalist and author, carried off the prize that year, his fish weighing 183 pounds. The next year Col. Morehouse landed his 251-pounder, entitling him to the presidency and establishing a record that has never been broken, a record that every member of the club secretly dreams of some day shattering.

Then the plans of the club broadened, and as the membership increased it was feared that Col. Morehouse might hold the presidency indefinitely, so it was decided to hold annual meetings at which an election of officers should figure. This is now done, and a cup is presented to the member who makes the largest catch of the season.

Since the organization of the club the honors have gone as follows:

Season of 1899, Prof. Holder, Pasadena, Cal., 183 pounds.

Season of 1900, Col. Morehouse, Pasadena, Cal., 251 pounds.

Season of 1901, F. S. Schenck, Brooklyn, and F. V. Rider, Avalon, tied at 158 pounds.

Season of 1902, John E. Stearns, Los Angeles, 197 pounds.

Season of 1903, H. E. Smith, New York, and B. F. Alden, New York, tied at 94 pounds.

Season of 1904, Gen. A. W. Barrett, San Francisco, 131 pounds.

The largest fish ever captured by a woman under the rules and regulations of the club was caught in 1900 by Mrs. E. N. Dickerson of New York. It tipped the scales at 216 pounds, but unfortunately for Mrs. Dickerson it was during the season of Col. Morehouse's big catch. Still, it is the next largest tuna of which there is any record.

The annual tournaments of the club are open to all comers, but the club's rules must be strictly complied with. Rods and reels must be used, and rods must not be less than 6 feet 9 inches in length. The tip must not weigh more than 16 ounces. Parenthetically it may be remarked that the rods in use are all of one piece, and by "tip" is meant all that portion of the rod from the reel seat to the end of the rod.

The line must not contain more than twenty-four threads or strands and be capable of sustaining not more than forty-eight pounds in dead weight. The angler must bring his fish to gaff unaided, and the fish must be reeled in. A broken rod, either before or after gaffing, disqualifies the angler.

The tournament is open to amateurs only, the professional boatmen of the island being barred. Only one rod can be used by each angler. All the catches made with a view of competing for prizes must be reported at once to some member of the weighing committee, and weighed in his presence. "No allowance will be made for shrinkage" is one of the rules.

The present officers of the club are as follows: President, Gen. A. W. Barrett, San Francisco; vice-president, E. N. Dickerson, New York; secretary and treasurer, F. V. Rider, Pasadena, Cal. The board of directors, which also comprises the weighing committee, is composed of the following: T. S. Manning, Philadelphia; E. L. Doran, Los Angeles; F. V. Rider, Pasadena; John Cline, Los Angeles; W. H. Burnham, Orange; Gen. A. W. Barrett, San Francisco, and E. N. Dickerson, New York.

Mr. Manning is custodian of the archives, and in his possession is the tuna book, containing a written account of every tuna that has ever been caught by a member of the club. Here is documentary evidence that cannot be disputed.

For instance, last summer Gordon Wiley of London, who had fished many waters in different parts of the world, came to Catalina to try his luck. He arrived on July 1 and fished patiently every day. He had several strikes, but it took him some time to get used to the peculiar habits of the fish. He had succeeded only in putting a lot of tackle out of commission up to July 10, when he landed a tuna weighing 107 pounds.

Then he packed up and went back to London, saying he had overstayed his time by a week, but would be on hand again next season. And he doubtless will keep his word, for once the quest of the tuna gets into one's blood there is no gainsaying it.

Trolling for tuna is done entirely from power launches. Live bait is used, preferably flying fish. Good catches have been made with large sized sardines, which fairly swarm in the Catalina waters.

The hook used is about twice the size of the ordinary tarpon hook, and the reel is literally a burden—until a fish is hooked. Then, z-z-z-z-zip! Unless one is prepared, and gives the signal at once to reverse the engine and back the boat, the 900 feet of line is gone in a jiffy, and it's either let go of the rod or have the line break off while you hold it.

That is where the novice loses his fish. That first rush is fatal unless the boat goes back at once in the direction the tuna is taking. If the angler is fortunate enough to combat that first mad dash through the water, his fun begins.

But it isn't necessarily certain that he is going to bring his capture to gaff. "There's many a slip between the hook and the gaff," is an old saying among tuna fishermen.

There is no harder fighter than this big mackerel—for the tuna is the largest of the mackerel family, to which also belong the albicore, the bonita and the skipjack, the latter three varieties, although smaller, affording good winter sport when the tuna are feeding on the bottom in water over a thousand feet deep.

Once hooked the tuna is up to all sorts of tricks, and not even his smaller but almost equally resourceful rival in gaminess, the black bass of fresh water, can give him any points on how to circumvent the fellow at the other end of the line. The Catalina boatmen will tell you of experienced fishermen who have played a tuna all day, only to lose him at last.

Plenty of strength, lots of endurance and an iron nerve are essential to the sport. Last summer a young man who had never had much experience went out after tuna, and strangely enough got his fish. It took him six hours, and then he keeled over in a dead faint.

Failing to resuscitate him, his boatman got him ashore with all possible speed, a matter of nearly five miles, and he was put to bed. A doctor brought him around after he had been in bed for three days, but it was a close call.

The young man had a weak heart, and the excitement of catching his first tuna was too much for him. Upon the doctor's advice he didn't try it again. But the fish was kept on ice for him, and as soon as he was able to be around he had his picture taken with it, and his experience furnishes an interesting chapter in the tuna book.

An interesting phase of the island life is the attitude of the photographers. In Los Angeles is a photographer who has a property fish, an enormous sea bass, which is cunningly stuffed and preserved. For a fish that has been out of water so long it is a work of art.

Behind this fish he has a painted screen representing a portion of the beach at Catalina, and he will take the picture of any tourist who has the price of $2 a dozen on souvenir postal cards. "Come in and have your picture taken catching the big sea bass" is the sign he displays, over his studio door, and many there be who enter therein.

But it is altogether different with the island photographers. It frequently happens that after a large catch the successful angler is photographed with his fish. Then some tourist will come along.

"I'd like to have a picture taken like that," says the tourist.

"All right. Where are your fish?" asks the photographer.

"Take me with these," says the tourist.

"But you didn't catch them?"

"No."

"Then I can't photograph you. Go out and catch your own fish."

The tourist is amazed.

"But you are in this business to make money, aren't you?" he expostulates.

"Yes, but not that kind of money," the picture man will reply.

And that ends it. There is no appeal.

The tuna is called the king of game fish. There are larger fish caught at Catalina, but none that causes the angler such a thrill. The Tuna Club offers prizes for the largest fish of other varieties taken, notably the yellowtail and the black sea bass, or jewfish, but although the latter often weigh over 300 pounds, they have not the fighting qualities of the lithe, slender tuna, with his slashing tail, his tremendous strength and his indomitable pluck. The record for black sea bass is 425 pounds, but a 100 pound tuna will put up more of a fight.

New York's Ten Thousand Clubwomen

Amazing Growth of Women's Clubs--Their Varied Objects--Things They Have Done for Women.

The circumstance that Sorosis, pioneer of woman's clubs, has reached its thirty-eighth birthday, that the Clio Club had a seventeenth birthday party the other day, and that Phalo is getting ready to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary early next fall calls attention to the tremendous growth of women's clubs in this city, and indeed the country over, in the last few years.

In Greater New York there are now 106 women's clubs which belong to the State and the city federation, besides nearly as many more which belong to neither organization, and the majority of which are not incorporated. From the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, from the Gulf to the Great Lakes, there is scarcely a city without at least one woman's club.

As a result there are more than 200 clubs belonging to the general federation. Of these, at least 60 per cent. were organized on strictly literary lines. The remainder are mostly clubs for educational purposes, for the study of Shakespeare, for classical study, for civic and political study. There are also several patriotic societies, alumnæ associations and working girls' associations. In the last four years twenty-three State federations have been formed.

Not long ago Mrs. Charlotte B. Wilbour, president of Sorosis and one of its founders, thinking that the high tide of women's club prosperity had surely been reached, and that therefore the ebb had already set in, wrote to a statistical friend something like this:

"I am thinking of preparing a club paper on the decline of the woman's club. What is your opinion?"

"Well," wrote back the friend, "you may if you can, but in consideration of the fact that something like 4,000 new clubs were started in the United States last year I'm afraid you will find it hard work to prove your point."

"And I relinquished my idea in a hurry," confessed Mrs. Wilbour in telling the story, "convinced that the high water mark in feminine clubdom was yet to be gained."

In view of these facts it was suggested by a mere man the other day that before long it will be absolutely necessary for prospective benedicts to make inquiry into the club habits of the women they admire before going so far as to pop the question. They will want to know, for instance, whether she belongs to one or to ten clubs, what her club dues are likely to foot up, what proportion of her time she expects to give to club engagements, &c.

Mrs. Lillie Devereux Blake, president of the Legislative League and honorary president of the Society for Political Study, who attends more club meetings in a year than perhaps any other woman in the country, does not think there is cause for alarm on this score.

"There is nothing to be gained by comparing men's clubs and women's clubs," she says. "They are totally different.

"The aim of a man's club is always amusement, whereas a woman's club generally plans for improvement. Then a man's club usually means a clubhouse. So far only one of the New York federated clubs—the Professional Woman's League—has a clubhouse. Why? Because women are the pauper sex.

"Yes, it is true to a certain extent that women have as good a chance these days to make money as men have, but it is also certain that women are not paid so well as men for doing the same work. A woman may do her work as well or better than a man, but she is certain to get less pay for it. Until that state of things is remedied women are bound to be the pauper sex.

"Women's clubs have done a lot to help women. Why, until the Legislative League, which was organized in 1900, took hold of the matter a mother in this State had not the slightest right to her own child. The League has been instrumental in the passage of laws making father and mother joint guardians of their children, granting school suffrage to women, enabling a woman to make a will without her husband's consent, providing that there shall be women trustees in all institutions where women are placed, providing seats for saleswomen, and some others.

"And yet I can remember the howl that went up over the country when Sorosis was organized, the dreadful word pictures of neglected and disrupted families which appeared in the newspapers and the cartoons illustrating them. One picture which went the rounds amid much applause represented a wagon load of wild eyed women drawn by horses plunging madly toward a precipice and destruction. The name 'Sorosis' appeared on the wagon's side."

As many of the older generation remember, Charles Dickens was innocently responsible for the breaking out of women's clubs in this country. It happened in this way:

Mr. Dickens arrived at this port to make a visit and look the Americans over, whereupon the New York Press Club scurried around to give him a banquet. Tickets, naturally, were in demand. The committee in charge of them was besieged.

Among other applicants was Mrs. Croly (Jennie June), who was met by a flat refusal. To admit women, however gifted, to a public dinner was unheard of. It never had been done and it could not and would not be done on that occasion. Women must resign themselves to forego listening to the great man's speech.

Naturally Mrs. Croly and her intimates were highly indignant. As Mrs. Charlotte B. Wilbour tells the story, at a St. Valentine party given by her soon afterward, a woman writer asked:

"Why can't we have a club of our own?"

"We can, and we will," replied Mrs. Croly, Alice Cary, Mrs. H. M. Field and a few kindred spirits, with the result that Sorosis was organized a few weeks later with fifteen members. Before the year was out there were sixty-two members, and the club was incorporated in December, 1868, giving as a reason for its being these objects:

"The promotion of agreeable and useful relations among women of literary, artistic and scientific tastes; the discussion and dissemination of principles and facts which promise to exert a salutary influence on women and on society; the establishment of an order which shall render the female sex helpful to each other and actively benevolent to the world."

Miss Alice Cary was the first president and served just once; then, overwhelmed by the adverse criticism poured out upon her and the club, she resigned to make way for Mrs. Croly.

"If we had announced an intention to start a soup kitchen, feed sick babies or make flannel petticoats for the heathen we would have had the country behind us," said Mrs. Wilbour, "but the fact that we proposed to meet and eat in a public restaurant and conduct ourselves with the independence of men brought down upon us the jeers of the entire country. Even the name of the club, which is a botanical term meaning many flowers in one, was used as a handle for reproach.

"'There was a disease of that name,' one newspaper declared, 'and the women of Sorosis have caught it.'

"In those days women entertained almost solely in their own homes. I think that was one reason why some of us were eager to go outside of the beaten track, sit in rooms we hadn't dusted and eat food to whose cooking we had given no thought.

"Charles Delmonico, then in his Fourteenth street place, was very nice to us, offering to furnish a good luncheon at each meeting for $1 a head, and it was at his place that Sorosis gave the first public dinner in this city to which men and women sat down on equal terms.

"Not long after an editor who in his paper declared that 'if a woman's club held together one year a good many people would find it necessary to revise their opinion of women' was obliged to revise his opinion, which he did handsomely in another editorial."

Mrs. Henrotin, long associated with women's clubs, made this statement several years ago: "In no place in the world can a woman come so easily to the front as in a large woman's club."

This being the case, it explains to some extent the amazing rapidity with which women's clubs caught the feminine fancy. A desire to come to the front is undoubtedly a strong American trait.

At any rate, from the founding of Sorosis, which gathered to itself at the outset some of the cleverest, if not the most practical, women of this city, the club movement was in full swing. One year later the Brooklyn Woman's Club, which now has a membership of more than 250, was organized, and almost simultaneously women's clubs sprang up in several of the larger cities of the country.

What was called by some the John Baptist of women's clubs was organized in 1873 under the name of Association for the Advancement of Woman. For a long time this club, for which Mrs. Wilbour was chief sponsor, held its meetings in the old Union Square Theatre, and the first club paper its members listened to was read by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, her subject being: "How can women best associate their efforts for the amelioration of society?" Although the members of this club, with but few exceptions, were living in New York, no fewer than eighteen States were represented in its board of officers.

The beginning of Phalo was exceedingly unostentatious. Three Scotch women and one English woman, for some years resident in America, met in the summer of 1880 on an ocean steamer on the return trip from a visit to the old country. Three of them were business women, the other was a school teacher.

Their intercourse was so pleasant during the voyage that in order to perpetuate it they said, "Let us start a club for the study of philosophy, history, art, literature and oratory," a big contract some people thought. From a beginning of six members, with Mrs. Moffat as president, the organization has grown to seventy-five members, and whenever at a club meeting one speaks of having heard a paper read on an abstruse subject, listeners look wise and remark:

"She has been to Phalo."

This club, by the way, coined its name by stringing together the first letters of the names of the studies to which the club is committed.

Up to this time the literary club had been to the front. Civic, patriotic and social clubs were yet to be heard from.

Miss Grace Dodge, in 1883, rung in a change and stamped the club movement with her approval by organizing what was probably the first working girls' club in the world, under the name of The Thirty-eighth Street Club of Working Girls. There were six members at the start. Now the membership of the working girls' clubs of New York counts up in the thousands.

The Woman's Health Protective Association, which started up the next year and has always been conducted along club lines, had a fight for its existence at first and was antagonized at every step, even after its first signal victory in compelling a well known property holder to remove a slaughter house from the East River front in the vicinity of Beekman Hill.

To mention only a few of the best known of the clubs which about that time cropped up, there were the Society for Political Study, organized in 1886; the Clio Club, which now has a membership of 100, in 1888, and the Women's Press Club, organized by Mrs. Croly, who gathered together forty young women writers in 1889. The club's membership now has passed the 150 mark.

It was during that same year—1889—that Sorosis, the mother club, as she was then called, took a step which made the woman's club movement something to be reckoned with all over the country by issuing a call for a national federation of clubs. An invitation was sent to every club in the country to send delegates to the meeting, and of the ninety-seven clubs communicated with sixty-one responded.

Between 1889 and 1894 women's clubs in New York and in New York State multiplied so fast that Sorosis again stepped to the front and scored another goal in her record of achievement by organizing the New York State Federation, of which Mrs. Philip Carpenter is now president.

"You can have no idea," said Mrs. Carpenter the other day in answer to a question, "how the woman's club has helped to develop woman."

"In what direction?" was asked.

"In every direction. It has taken her out of the home rut, made her less small, developed unusual talents, raised her above gossip, helped her to lose self-consciousness, taught her self-control, kept her abreast of current events—in short, helped her to be a better home maker, a better mother," and Mrs. Carpenter leaned back and looked as if there were volumes more which could be said along the same lines. It would certainly take volumes to describe in detail the spread and increase of clubs since the national federation was organized.

In 1890 the Original Society of Colonial Dames started clubdom along patriotic lines and was closely followed by the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Daughters of the Revolution, the Daughters of 1812, Daughters of the Cincinnati and half a dozen others of the same character.

The Legislative League started in 1890, the Professional Woman's League and the Post Parliament Club were both organized in 1892 and the New England Society of Women started in this city in 1895 with fifteen members as against 700 on its roll to-day. The Eclectic Club, born in 1896, and Minerva, in 1898, are among the best known and most popular of the clubs counted in the State federation list to-day.

The Eclectic Club approaches nearer perhaps to being distinctly fashionable than any of the others. In the beginning of the club movement the charge was frequently made by cavilling outsiders that the club enthusiast was generally to be distinguished by buttonless gloves and frayed petticoats—a charge which one member of Sorosis, whose gloves in truth were generally in a shocking condition, met by saying:

"Well, if it comes to a question of going without gloves or a club meeting, I will shed the gloves."

It has come to pass, however, that the average club woman is no less smart in her appearance than some of the smart women who turn their backs on clubs, and indeed in the last few years it is not unusual to hear of fashionable women succumbing to the fascinations of club life. In fact plans are now afoot to build a handsome clubhouse for the exclusive use of a picked number of women conspicuous socially. This club, however, is designed to meet only the social requirements of its members. There is nothing whatever in its bylaws, so far as they are known, relating to the cultivation of the intellect.

The membership of the Eclectic Club is now 150, and in two years more the limit, 200, will have been reached, for by a rule of the club twenty-five new members, no more, are to be taken in each year.

Mrs. Doré Lyon, president of the club, in a chat regarding the expense attending club life, said frankly:

"If a woman belongs to a dozen or so clubs, naturally the outlay would be considerable. I know many women who belong to as many as that, and there is Mrs. Blank, who I will venture to say is a member of at least fifty clubs, and Mrs. Smith, who goes ahead of Mrs. Blank even.

"Now in this club the dues are $20, $5 less than they ask in Sorosis, and that sum pays for the luncheon, which is a feature of every meeting. We meet every other week from November to May, and, as our name indicates, the discussions and the papers read at the meetings are along modern lines and, more often than not deal with important questions of the moment.

"In clubs where no set luncheon is served dues range from $5 to $10, but, of course, in no case does a yearly fee cover travelling expenses, the cost of a club pin, if the club uses a pin, or other incidentials, like a yearly banquet, say.

"The club movement has developed so fast that nowadays none of us feels obliged to apologize for belonging to a club."

"Estimating from my own expenditures," said a woman who belongs to five clubs, and is often a guest at as many more in the season, "most club women, and by that I mean women who return club obligations and keep up with club life, spend at least $100 a year.

"A woman may belong to one small club and pay out maybe not more than $5 a year, but I am not speaking of that sort of clubwoman. There are many small clubs of a dozen or two dozen members, who do not pretend to exchange club courtesies or do things on a large scale—clubs which do not belong to even the city federation, which was organized in 1903 by Mrs. Belle De Rivera. Members of these clubs I do not class as clubwomen.

"I have a friend whose club expenses last year were $200, and she belongs to but five clubs. Of course she was not taxed that sum, but she chose to spend it, felt herself obliged to spend it, to keep up her end, as she expresses it."

The last comer, so far as is known, to the New York circle of women's clubs is called the Daughters of Indiana. This was organized only five months ago, and yet the membership is already 100, all women from the Hoosier State.

When hardly more than organized, with Miss Mary G. Hay as president, the club started in to do things by offering a big reception at the Hotel Astor, its regular meeting place, to Mrs. Fairbanks, wife of the Vice-President of the United States. The society's semi-monthly programme will be devoted to a study of the works of the authors of Indiana.

Like the Daughters of Ohio, a club which antedated it more than one year, the Daughters of Indiana admit as members only women who were born in the home State.

The late Mrs. Croly, founder of women's clubs, in one of her addresses said:

"The woman's club was not an echo; it was not the mere banding together for a social and economic purpose like the clubs of men. It has been in every sense an awakening to the full glory and meaning of life."

If this be true, it is pleasant to know that in Greater New York there are at least 10,000 women who have experienced this glory.